

Metropolitan Transportation Commission and Association of Bay Area Governments
Joint MTC ABAG Legislation Committee

December 12, 2025

Agenda Item 3b

Senate Bill 375 Modernization

Subject:

Update on statewide efforts to modernize Senate Bill (SB) 375, the 2008 state law that governs sustainable communities strategies.

Overview:

Under federal law, metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) must adopt fiscally constrained long-range Regional Transportation Plans (RTPs) that address national transportation and air quality priorities. In 2008, California enacted SB 375 (Steinberg), which requires each metropolitan region's RTP include a strategy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from cars and light truck travel, including planning for adequate housing near jobs and transit to accommodate expected population growth.

In the Bay Area, MTC and ABAG jointly develop the Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS), and every four years, the RTP/SCS is adopted as the region's long-range transportation and land use plan. Every eight years, ABAG is also responsible for developing the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA), which must be consistent with the SCS. The Bay Area's current RTP/SCS is Plan Bay Area 2050; Plan Bay Area 2050+ is set to be adopted early next year. SB 375 has served California well by strengthening the connection between transportation, land use, and housing planning. But the policy landscape and on-the-ground realities, such as the significant growth in zero-emission vehicles and deepening climate change and affordability challenges, have shifted significantly since 2008. After 17 years, staff believe it is time to revisit the planning process to enable greater focus on implementation and deliver meaningful progress toward California's climate, transportation, and housing goals.

SB 375 Modernization Effort in 2026

MTC and our "Big 4" MPO partners – Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG), and San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) – are proposing to co-lead legislation in 2026 to modernize SB 375. Earlier this year, the Big 4 contracted with former Senate President Pro Tem Darrell Steinberg

(the author of SB 375) to support the effort, including by facilitating a series of statewide stakeholder discussions. Three roundtable sessions were held in fall 2025, with additional engagement planned early next year to help shape the legislative proposal.

Consistent with prior year advocacy programs, MTC-ABAG's approach to this effort is aimed at empowering the Bay Area to craft and implement an SCS that balances and advances climate, equity, mobility, and affordability goals to improve quality of life for all Bay Area residents. The work is guided by the following policy objectives, which are described in greater detail in Attachment B:

- Streamline SCS development and increase capacity for implementation
- The SCS should reflect a balanced set of goals
- Secure a stronger state partner in implementation
- The SCS should earn trust and drive action

Next Steps

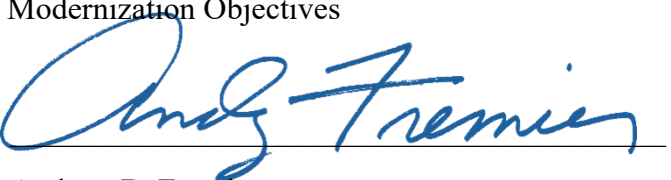
MTC-ABAG will continue participating in statewide discussions through 2025 and coordinate with legislative staff and stakeholders to prepare a bill for introduction in early 2026. Staff will also continue to participate in a California State Transportation Agency-led Sustainable Communities Task Force, which is exploring complementary administrative and budget actions for 2027 and beyond.

Recommendation:

Information

Attachments:

- Attachment A: SB 375 Modernization Presentation
- Attachment B: MTC-ABAG SB 375 Modernization Objectives


Andrew B. Fremier